



Universal Acceptance Day Uruguay - May 26 , 2025

Presentation by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)

Rodrigo de la Parra – ICANN:

Thank you very much , Laura , and good morning to everyone. It's truly a shame I can't be there to share with you this second edition of Universal Acceptance Day in Uruguay, and several editions around the world. As Laura mentioned, this was one of three events in Latin America and the Caribbean where UNESCO participated .

And to tell you a little about our relationship with UNESCO, to introduce the topic, well, we'll have to go back to the times of... the World Summit on the Information and Knowledge Society in 2003 and 2005, where UNESCO was also particularly promoting this concept of a multilingual Internet. At that time, we had a project that still exists and is progressing very well, which is the concept of internationalized domain names, which is a concept, let's say, a precursor. And a basis for discussions on universal acceptance.

Internationalized domain names or IDNs , Internationalized Domain Names , by its acronym in English, is something that allows us to use Internet addresses, domain names, and email addresses in alphabets other than Latin. That is, and particularly, English. In the case of Spanish, although we have the same alphabet as a base, we have some special characters that at the dawn of the Internet, they were the only ones we were allowed to use for these functions: domain names and email addresses.

So, from there, we also began working on... Together with UNESCO, we have a memorandum of understanding with them to initially support the issue of internationalized domain names, but also now, more recently, the issue of universal acceptance. So we greatly value this partnership we have with UNESCO, and now, this year, as we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the end of the World Summit on the Information Society, its 2005 edition in Tunis, it's a good time to reflect on the progress we've made on the issue of a multilingual Internet.

Many of the concerns that existed back then weren't just focused on the issue of internationalized domain names, but more generally on the amount of content in different languages on the Internet, because Internet content was predominantly in English. Things have changed somewhat, trying to reflect the multilingual reality in the world. As you know, the most widely used language isn't English; there are a variety of languages that exist in the world, which are used by more people around the world, and we want that to be a reflection of the Internet. That's why the issue of internationalized domain names is intended to help and support this goal of a global network.

Another key factor in understanding the issue of universal acceptance is the issue of new generic domains that have also emerged through different rounds since 2004, right? There was a first round, and you, just for those who don't know, there are generic top-level domains, well, top-level domains are those domains that are found to the right of the last point, and they can be of two types, they can be country codes like . ui , or . br , or . mx , they are generic domains.

[illegible]

1,200 generic top-level domains delegated to the root and that describe cities, brands, also communities, etc. 1,200 and today we are on the eve of a next round.

These generic domains can also be in characters other than the Latin alphabet, but they can also be longer names, longer words, and can be practically anything. And along with internationalized domain names, they have tested different systems and user interfaces. Due to the growth of these generic top-level domains and the inclusion of characters other than the Latin alphabet, there are still many platforms today that do not recognize either the new generic top-level names, generic top-level domains, or these special characters and other alphabets.

So, for several years now, within the Cannes community, we've recognized that this is a problem, and we're undertaking various tasks and initiatives to address it. So, we're basically attacking it through our community of experts on the subject, with the support of UNESCO and all of you, as well as this initiative.

And it basically happens on three levels. We're attacking the main part, so to speak, which is raising awareness of the challenge we face. On the other hand, we're providing more specific technical training focused on solving the problem specifically for software and technology developers, so they understand how it can be solved in a simple way. And thirdly... And thirdly, a more long-term solution, so to speak, is to try to include the issue of universal acceptance in academic programs, right? So that this aspect is already something that is organically learned in the various academic programs related to the topic, and they can then adopt the solution.

So, well, I thank you for the opportunity to... To be able to address these brief introductory words on the topic of universal acceptance. I see you have a very busy agenda, panelists of the highest caliber, and extensive knowledge of the topic. In particular, we'll also have my colleague Nicolás Antonielo from ICANA , who will be able to describe what I've discussed with you today in much greater detail and with much greater technical depth .

Society Uruguay chapter , and Laura Margolis in particular, for the invitation. I congratulate you on the initiative. I wish you every success, and of course, I also want to thank UNESCO for joining this day there in Uruguay. So, well, without further ado, I thank you again and wish you much success on your day. Thank you, Laura.